

Energy Efficiency News

As Senator John Kerry and Joe Lieberman's climate change bill flounders in the Senate, a group of nearly 60 businesses, trade associations and environmental groups have sent an open letter to Senator Harry Reid urging the inclusion of an energy efficiency resource standard (EERS) for utilities in any redrafted legislation.

With the climate change bill out of contention for the moment, Senator Reid looks set to introduce a much scaled back bill focusing on raising the liability cap for oil spills, energy efficiency measures and using natural gas for transportation.

The group, which includes Johnson Controls, Gap, eBay, Nike and Starbucks, wants to see a 1% reduction in energy usage every year, driven by incentives for investment in efficiency upgrades.

An EERS could save the US \$100 billion in energy costs by 2020, says the group in an open letter to Senator Reid, reduce energy bills for homes and businesses by over 30% and create up to 900,000 jobs.

Twenty states in the US already have an EERS of at least 1% and while existing Senate bills include some energy efficiency provision, it does not come close to this level, the group argues.

Meanwhile, Congresswoman Betty McCollum yesterday introduced the Thermal Renewable Energy and Efficiency Act (TREEA), which would expand the use of district energy and combined heat and power (CHP) systems.

The bill would create a thermal energy production tax credit (PTC), expanding on the existing credit for renewable electricity generation, and expand the scope of the Department of Energy's remit for energy sustainability and efficiency grants to allow them to support large district energy and CHP systems.

"The best kept secret in this country is district energy technology," says McCollum. "Congress and the Department of Energy need to wake up and start investing in this proven technology that will create clean energy jobs and reduce energy dependence."

Nearly a third of the energy currently consumed in the US goes to the heating and cooling of buildings and industrial processes, representing a huge opportunity for savings through improved efficiency and use of renewables resources.

For further information:

<http://energyefficiencyworks.org/press-room/press-releases/businesses-clean-energy-advocate-s-urge-reid-senate-to-pass-robust-energy-efficiency-resource-standard>

<http://reid.senate.gov/>

www.mccollum.house.gov/

www.districtenergy.org